

STROUDSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 17, 2023

A regular meeting of the Stroudsburg Borough Council convened at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, January 17, 2023 in the Council Chambers of the Stroudsburg Borough Municipal Building with the following members present: Council President Matt Abell, Vice-President of Council Erica McCabe, Council President Pro-Tem Tobias Sabatine, and Council member Joanne Kochanski. Council member Victoria DeVries advised of her absence prior to the meeting. Council member James Smith was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consideration to nominate and appoint a person to fill the unexpired term of Council member Jim Evanisko; the term will expire December 31, 2023.

One letter of interest for the vacancy on the Borough Council was received. Melody Trunfio, a resident of 512 Brown Street, expressed interest in serving for the unexpired term of Jim Evanisko. Ms. Trunfio was present and advised Council that she has been living in the Borough for 21 years. She discussed her participation in town events and with the Stroudsburg Area School District.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to appoint Melody Trunfio as a Borough Council member to fill the unexpired term of Jim Evanisko. Her term will expire December 31, 2023. The motion was carried. (4-yes; 0-no; 0-abstain)

Mayor Moreno administered the Oath of Office to Council member Melody Trunfio.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on January 3, 2023

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2023 meeting as circulated. The motion was carried. (3-yes; 0-no; 2-abstentions-Ms. McCabe and Ms. Trunfio)

Monthly Administrative Reports

The following monthly reports were approved on a motion made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine: Parking Report, Public Works Report, Right to Know Report, and the December, 2022 SARP Report. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Accept Unaudited December, 2022 Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to approve the December, 2022 Bank Account Balance Report and the December 2022 Budget to Actual Report. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Alta Planning + Design presentation to Council about the DOT RAISE Grant and Five Points Intersection.

Jennifer Baldwin from Alta Planning and Design was present via Zoom.us to discuss the Main Street RAISE Application, “Transforming Main Street: A Path to Safety, Livability, and Economic Opportunity in Stroudsburg”. A draft of the application will be ready for Council to review on February 10, 2023. The application must be filed no later than February 27, 2023.

The funding request is \$13,439,609.00 based on the results of the Mobility Study. By adding the additional scope of work to include the Five Points Intersection Improvements, the total request will be between \$15 M and \$16 M.

There were no questions or comments from the Borough Council or the public.

Consideration to approve a request from the Sherman Theater to conduct Stroudfest on Saturday, September 2, 2023 from 11:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Sarah Collier, the chairperson for the event, was present. A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the request from the Sherman Theatre to conduct Stroudfest on Saturday, September 2, 2023 from 11:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to adopt a Resolution of the Borough of Stroudsburg in the County of Monroe, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Approving the Brodhead Creek Regional Authority’s Acquisition of the Assets and Water Service Area of the Pocono-Jackson Joint Water Authority.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to adopt the aforementioned Resolution. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to adopt a Resolution of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Authorize the Signers of Banking Instruments of the Borough of Stroudsburg and to Set Forth the Limits of Said Authority.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to adopt the aforementioned Resolution. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to adopt a Resolution of the Stroudsburg Borough Council to Authorize the Disposal of Obsolete Computer Equipment.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to adopt the aforementioned Resolution. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Mayoral Proclamation – National Future Business Leaders of America, Inc. “FBLA-PBL” Week, February 5, 2023 to February 11, 2023.

Mayor Moreno read the Proclamation for National FBLA-PBL Week, which is February 5, 2023 to February 11, 2023. The Stroudsburg High School FBLA Advisor, Ms. Jodi Haggerty, was present to receive the proclamation.

Consider the addition of three (3) HARB applications to the agenda per Section 712.1(c) (2) and (2) of the Sunshine Law.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mrs. Kochanski to add three (3) HARB applications to the agenda per Section 712.1(c) (2) and (2) of the Sunshine Law. Solicitor Brown explained that the three applications were approved by HARB on January 4, 2023, and they were time sensitive. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to approve the application of Monroe County for a new ADA-accessible ramp and entryway at 528 Thomas Street, contingent on the applicant’s return to the HARB at its February 6, 2023 meeting to review the details of the replacement materials.

John Christy, Monroe County Commissioner; Timothy McManus, Esq., Solicitor for the Monroe County Courthouse Expansion Project; and Jared Predmore, L.P.A were present. Solicitor McManus advised the Council that the HARB approved the County’s application; however, the proposed white PVC railing was not approved. The County will be going back before the HARB and will propose a black, metal railing. Mr. Predmore circulated a brochure showing the type of railing that will be presented to the HARB.

A motion was made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness to Monroe County for the addition of a new ADA-accessible ramp and entryway at 528 Thomas Street (the former Ramsey School) contingent upon the applicant’s return to the HARB at its February 6, 2023 meeting to review the details of the proposed replacement materials. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to approve the application of Ian Schrier for the replacement of the existing overhead garage door and installation of 3-4 windows at 735 Main Street.

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness to Ian Schrier for the replacement of the existing overhead garage door and installation of 3-4 windows at 735 Main Street. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Consideration to approve the application of the Monroe County Historical Association to amend its previously-approved application by removing windows, installing cast-metal lettering for signage, and to add exterior lighting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to approve the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Monroe County Historical Association for the removal of windows, the installation of cast-metal lettering for signage, and for the installation of exterior lighting. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Committee Reports

Codes Committee – Mr. Abell advised that the Committee will be working on the Vandalism Ordinance. Mayor Moreno recently attended a meeting of the Downtown Merchants Association, and the members have asked that Council consider raising the fines for violations of the Borough’s Vandalism Ordinance. Mr. Abell stated that the Committee will be revisiting the Solid Waste Collection Ordinance as it relates to trash collection at vacant properties. They are also working on problem properties.

Budget Committee – Nothing new to report.

Parking Committee – Ms. McCabe advised that the Committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 4:30 P.M.

Recycling Committee – Nothing new to report.

Sewer Committee - Nothing new to report.

Street Committee – Mayor Moreno reported that the Committee met on January 4 and discussed future paving projects and the proposed wayfinding signs for businesses that are not located on Main Street. The next meeting is February 1 at 4:00 P.M.

Personnel Committee – Mr. Kopp advised that he had a few personnel matters for executive session.

Public Relations/Media Committee –Mr. Sabatine reported that the Ann Street Park waterfalls are lit. The Committee will be working on a mission statement, a business directory, the summer concert series, and something to commemorate Black History month in February.

I-80 Expansion Task Force Committee – Nothing new to report.

Stroud Region Open Space and Recreation Commission – Ms. McCabe announced that SROSCR Director Autumn Hawthorne and her husband welcomed a baby girl to their family recently.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Moreno reported that he attended the January 10 meeting of the Downtown Stroudsburg Business Association. Winterfest will be held on February 18, 2023 with over 50 ice sculptures. The Main Street Makery, formerly Kitchen Chemistry, will open on February 18 also. The Pocono Arts Council is moving from 727 Main Street to 530 Main Street. There will be a grand opening on February 18. Seven Mountains Media, home of WSBG, has acquired Pocono 96.7 and will be situated at 639 Main Street. A new restaurant, Finola’s, will be opening on Main Street across from Yard of Ale.

The Mayor became aware of a few grants that the Borough may qualify for: Pocono Mountains Visitors' Bureau Community Impact Grant opens February 1. Qualifying projects include parking additions to trailheads/recreation areas, landscaping, outdoor seating, playgrounds, recycling programs, trash removal systems and beautification projects.

He also reached out to the Economic Development Director of Matt Cartwright's Office, April Niver, to discuss the PA Main Street Program, the Our Town Grant, and FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. Mr. Kopp stated that the professional grant writer, Jason Fitzgerald, Penn Strategies, is aware of those programs.

The recent vandalism of a few of the Snowmen of Stroudsburg was also a topic of the Downtown Merchants Association. The Borough will have an additional fourteen (14) cameras online this year. SARP received a grant for five (5) additional cameras to be placed in the Borough for a total of 33 cameras. SARP has six (6) cadets who just graduated from the police academy. The cadets will be paired with senior officers for six months. There are 48 full time police officers now. Mayor Moreno and SARPD Chief Jennifer Lyon have been in constant contact about the vandalism. He urged the public to call 9-1-1 if suspicious activity is seen in the Borough.

Council Member Reports

Mr. Abell invited Ms. Trunfio to consider joining some of the Committees were there are vacancies. He gave a brief description of each Committee and when the meetings are held.

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Brown did not have anything new to report.

Manager's Report

Meetings

TextMyGov Demo	January 4 th
Alta/Raise Work Plan	January 5 th
Chamber Public Policy Meeting	January 6 th
Bare Root Tree Grant Program	January 9 th
Downtown Business Association	January 10 th
Dave Horton/BCRA	January 12 th
Dave Steckel/Personnel Issues	January 12 th
Alta/PennDOT RAISE Grant & Five Points	January 13 th
Jon PAMS/Trash Billing	January 17 th
Alta Raise Check-In	January 19 th
Pension Board Meeting	January 24 th

Infrastructure/Streets/Capital Projects

Sidewalk Replacement Project/Multimodal Grant. Wrapped up for the season. Remainder of project will be completed in the Spring (March 2023). Working on rebid portion of grant funds not yet expended in January.

Ann Street Sewer Replacement & Paving. Public comment period for Draft Abbreviated Act 537 Plan Update. Approve at first February meeting and then submit to DEP. Then begin bid process.

Grants Strategy 2023

LSA Grant. Statewide LSA Grant submitted on March 15th. Will be voted on by the CFA Board on January 12, 2023.

DCED Multimodal. Grant completed and submitted. Contains “Quick Build” elements of Main Street Project. Will be voted on by the CFA Board on January 12, 2023.

Monroe County LSA Grant. Submitted on September 28th. For “Quick Build” elements of the plan.

H2O & Small Water and Sewer Grants. Submitted to CFA by December 21st.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant. Awarded \$218,236; 5% minimum match required.

Consolidated Bargaining Agreement (CBA with Teamsters Union)

Contacted by union; they want to start negotiations early, which I support. Scheduling a meeting in mid-February, date TBD.

Engineering Creek Walk Project

Contract signed. Peters is beginning work on project.

Mobility Study/Alta Planning

Working with Alta on grant and Penn Strategies for Letters of Support. Grant is very political, so support from elected officials is key. PennDOT is supporting; tie-in with I-80 Project. RAISE Grant Round in 2023 has been announced by DOT; \$75 Million allocated by DOT for this round. Minimum grant of \$1 Million; 50% going to rural areas. Cost share 20% or less depending on a number of factors; rural areas may have smaller matches.

Capital Improvements Plan

In first quarter 2023, completing a 10-year Capital Improvements Plan for the Borough listing all major capital projects and purchases through 2031.

Borough Building Repairs

Working on getting quotes for repairs. In the 2023 Budget.

Parking Meters

We are going to have to replace some meters; a number of the old meters cannot handle the increased rates. Robin is getting me quotes on meters that only take coins and those that take credit cards as well.

Verkada Security Cameras

Installation underway. Approximately 60% complete. Working on completing this project now that I am free from other projects.

Solid Waste Ordinance

Carts/cans distributed last week in December. Compliance is very high; a small number of minor pick-up issues that we are ironing out with GFL. Sending out mailing (attached to report) to remind residents of Ordinance's requirements. Biggest issue is too much trash for cans; probably is a recycling issue. Working on billing with PAMS.

Dumpster Ordinance Implementation

On hold until I receive further guidance. 42 properties have asked for appeal or some sort of relief from the Ordinance. 17 Properties have either complied or have met with me and have received go-ahead to proceed. I have received no response from 72 properties.

Sewer Billing

Met with Dave Horton to discuss. Want to ensure we are including verbiage for procedures for overdue accounts. Our Ordinance spells out in detail exactly what is required for 60+ day overdue accounts; they must be sent to a collection agency. Only question is interest rates charged to overdue accounts; Solicitor for BCRA contends that anything above 10% interest annually is illegal, which our Ordinance currently is. Chris is looking into this.

Sewer Rates/EDU Reassessment

Inspection of properties complete. Final review in 2023 and appeal for those whose EDUs are changing. Look at potential EBU system in 2023. Use data to review and update rental property information develop comprehensive database for the Borough with all resident information.

Sewer Collection System/I&I Initiative

BCRA is scheduling a meeting to discuss I&I in late February. Meeting with Russ and Brian on Friday to put together report; we did a considerable amount of work on this in 2022.

LERTA

Met with Cos Curry from the School District to discuss LERTA. School Board is tentatively “on-board,” need to draft a new “draft” Ordinance in conjunction with the District and County Commissioners to ensure everyone agrees.

Code Enforcement

Rental Properties: Follow-up letter sent between Christmas and New Years that have not yet registered their properties. Very Small response back. These are the “hard core” slum lords.

Short-Term Rentals: Compiling list of properties for notification.

Staff Training

Working on a training presentation on Customer Service.

MyGov Software for Codes/Zoning

Going fully “live” with MyGov in 2023 on select permits and licenses. Customers will be required, unless they have a compelling reason, to submit all permit and license online through the Customer Service Portal.

Emergency Operations Plan

I’m working with Mehmet to update our contacts and to look specifically at EMP and Cyber Attacks. Current world situation has me concerned and I want us to be ready. Plan was due to be updated in 2021.

Sewer Fund Delinquent Accounts/Liens

Mary Pat is looking at our list of liens and see what liens need to be renewed and if any need to be taken of the lit. BCRA wants to review billing procedures, as do I. I have talked to three collection agencies with the idea of letting them go after delinquent accounts, which is allowed in our Sewer Ordinance.

Bicycle Racks

Three racks remain to be installed: 745 Main, 401 Main & 33 North 7th Streets. North 7th Street was approved with a slightly changed location. Waiting to hear back from the remaining two property owners. One property owner (1172 Main Street) declined to have the rack on their property. Installation in Spring 2023.

Upcoming Focus

Capital Improvements Plan
Sewer EDU Assessment Plan
Dumpster Ordinance Implementation

RAISE/Main Street Grants
Rental Property Registrations
Day to Day Activities

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

There was nothing to report.

Street Superintendent's Report

Mr. Ace confirmed that the lights are up on the waterfalls at the Ann Street Park. A discussion ensued about the Multimodal Grant Sidewalk Replacement Project. The contractor, Vanic, will finish the work that they are contracted to do when the weather permits. The Ann Street Park sidewalks will go out to bid in the spring.

Approval of Bills on Warrants 230117

A motion was made by Ms. McCabe, seconded by Mr. Sabatine to approve the payment of bills on Warrants 230117. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

Public Input for Non-Agenda Items

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Executive Session, re: Personnel

A motion was made by Mrs. Kochanski, seconded by Ms. McCabe to go in to an executive session at 8:14 P.M. for the purpose of discussing personnel matters. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

The executive session concluded at 8:40 P.M. on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M. on a motion made by Mr. Sabatine, seconded by Ms. McCabe. The motion was carried. (5-yes; 0-no; 0-abstentions)

